

# 1-1 Introduction

Caltrans is responsible for operations, maintenance and tort liability after State Highway projects are constructed. Caltrans is also responsible for providing for the authorized expansion of the system and for assessing the impact of improvements proposed by others to the existing system.

To ensure that projects on the State Highway system are well designed, safe, and properly constructed, all project planning, design, and construction should be performed in accordance with Caltrans standards and practices and according to the Caltrans project development process.

Caltrans assures that special funded projects (i.e. projects to be built on State Right of Way which are sponsored and developed by others) conform to the appropriate standards and procedures by providing oversight through all project phases from inception through construction completion. The Office of Special Funded Projects (OSFP), of the Division of Engineering Services (DES), has oversight responsibility for structure portions of special funded projects that involve transportation related structures.

For the purposes of this Guide, oversight is defined as the effort necessary to assure conformance to Caltrans standards and practices. Within OSFP, oversight generally consists of project liaison, coordination, and technical reviews at various project milestones. While there are certain variations between project categories and general responsibilities, depending on project funding or the lead agency, the requirements for oversight, and the resulting quality of the final product, remains the same.

This Guide is intended for use by OSFP, other DES and Caltrans personnel, local entities, design consultants and other authorities, agencies or disciplines involved in the preparation of projects that require OSFP oversight. The purpose of this Guide is to establish general, uniform levels of project development and oversight and should not be substituted for the good judgement of the user.

This Guide supplements the following Caltrans documents, which can be obtained from the Caltrans Publication Distribution Unit:

- *Procedures Manual for Special Funded State Highway Projects*
- *Project Development Procedures Manual*